



BOOK REVIEWS

Arthur F. Kinney

FLANNERY O'CONNOR'S LIBRARY: RESOURCES OF BEING

Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1985. Pp. 195

Reviewed by Melvin J. Friedman

Joseph Blotner rendered all Faulkner scholars an invaluable service when he published *William Faulkner's Library: A Catalogue* in 1964. This book became a model for further ventures of this kind; to some extent it helped spawn an industry which in the next several years included Merton M. Sealts's checklist of Melville's reading and Walter Harding's catalogue of Emerson's library.

Now Arthur F. Kinney, like Blotner an important Faulkner scholar, offers a complete catalogue of the Flannery O'Connor holdings now housed in the Ina Dillard Russell Library at Georgia College. Joseph Blotner wrote in the introduction to his Faulkner catalogue that his book should offset the disturbing view of "the Mississippi novelist as another untutored genius warbling his native wood-notes wild." Something of the same misconception had accompanied Flannery O'Connor's reputation for some time—partly enhanced by her insistent, calculated misspelling "interleckchul"—but Sally Fitzgerald's selection from her letters, *The Habit of Being* (1979), Leo J. Zuber and Carter W. Martin's collection of her book reviews, *The Presence of Grace* (1983), and, especially, Arthur F. Kinney's *Flannery O'Connor's Library* have set the record straight. The 712 items closely scrutinized by Kinney attest to O'Connor's intellectual and literary interests. And we are reminded in the introduction of "those books not in the collection" (p. 4), which O'Connor surely owned and read at one time. Among the missing are 40 books she reviewed for such periodicals as *The Bulletin* and *The Southern Cross* during the last decade of her life. Also not included in the Georgia College gathering is some fiction for which she wrote dust jacket commentary, certain books she referred to in her letters, and such staples of every writer's library as essential works by Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Austen, Hardy, and Flaubert. (It is difficult to forget those admiring words she expressed about Flaubert in *Mystery and Manners*: "All the sentences in *Madame Bovary* could be examined with wonder.") So it is clear that the actual number of volumes she at one time had in her possession substantially exceeded the 712 Kinney is confronted with here.

Flannery O'Connor's Library: Resources of Being is a great deal more than a checklist of holdings. Each entry offers the usual bibliographical information, but then ventures into areas too often ignored by cataloguers. Every marking on the page is recorded, every bit of marginalia is reproduced. Blotner tells us that "William Faulkner did not, like many readers, scribble his reactions to his reading on the pages themselves. Neither did he mark words or lines." O'Connor did both in a substantial number of the books she owned. She insistently underlined, used marginal linings, and commented in the margins. While most of her marginal jottings never reached the inspired level of someone like Coleridge—who made an art form of marginalia—she occasionally offered some revealing notations, as in her copy of *The Divine Comedy*, which she had "probably used as a school text" (see item 437, pp. 134-35).

Following the detailed description of the book or journal in question, Kinney frequently offers the full text of marked passages where "there is a clear relationship between that material and her thought or writings" (p. 12). O'Connor probably took very seriously, for example, the following sentences which she marked in her copy of David Cecil's *Early Victorian Novelists: Essays in Revaluation* (see item 411, p. 128): "If a writer's creative imagination only works within a limited range, it is clear he ought to stay within it. The great conscious artists, Jane Austen, Flaubert, and Turgenev, do; and this is why they are so consistently successful. There is a great deal they cannot write about; but they do not try." O'Connor surely belongs in the company of these "great conscious artists" with their "limited range." Kinney's inspired notion of quoting these marked sections gives his compilation a new dimension: it becomes

something of an anthology of favorite passages from her reading, O'Connor's personal *Bartlett's*.

Another serendipitous feature of *Flannery O'Connor's Library: Resources of Being* is that it keys entries, where relevant, to *The Habit of Being* and *The Presence of Grace*. Thus whenever an item is mentioned in O'Connor's letters or is the subject of one of her book reviews we are given full details. A spot check revealed a few discrepancies. On several occasions Kinney indicates, apparently incorrectly, that the review was unpublished, and makes no reference to *The Presence of Grace*. An example is the entry for Michael de la Bedoyère's *The Archbishop and the Lady: The Story of Fénelon and Madame Guyon* (item 181, pp. 60-61)—the review of which is indeed found in *The Presence of Grace*, p. 27, with a notation that it originally appeared in *The Bulletin* for September 29, 1956.

It should finally be said that Kinney has produced an exemplary study of Flannery O'Connor's library. One discovers at every turn precious bits of information which can only expand one's understanding of the Georgia writer's art. One such notable find is in item 347, on p. 115, which lists an article on Thoreau entitled "*Christian Malgré Lui*." We now know where O'Connor probably got the phrase which she uses about Hazel Motes in her Author's Note to the 1962 edition of *Wise Blood*. Many other disclosures are placed at one's finger tips in *Flannery O'Connor's Library: Resources of Being*. It is difficult to imagine anyone improving on what Arthur F. Kinney has done here.

Jörg Schönert, ed.

**LITERATUR UND KRIMINALITÄT: DIE
GESELLSCHAFTLICHE ERFAHRUNG VON VERBRECHEN
UND STRAFVERFOLGUNG ALS GEGENSTAND DES
ERZÄHLENS. DEUTSCHLAND, ENGLAND UND
FRANKREICH 1850-1880**

Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1983. Pp. 380

Reviewed by Josef Schmidt

The volume represents the findings (discussion and papers) of the "Interdisziplinäres Kolloquium der Forschergruppe 'Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur 1770-1900'" which took place in Munich in January 1981. In ten chapters, the position papers of the main speakers and part of the discussions have been edited in this very user-friendly book. It combines German thoroughness with an unusual concern for facile reading; the annotations and bibliographical information have been inserted with concise comments relating to the specific context. As the title indicates, "Literature and Criminality" tries to conceptualize crime as a social function under different aspects; four of the chapters are devoted to the socio-historical dimension. And the remaining six chapters then connect these surveys (Rechtsgeschichte, Polizei, etc.) with the various modes and genres of narration. The range reaches from sensational fiction to accounts of actual trials. One can see that this work grew over a period of time; and the spirited discussion has been preserved for the printed version of the proceedings. It undoubtedly will remain the standard work on the topic for some time to come, for the historical and geographical restrictions have allowed a succinctness and concreteness which have made extrapolations and generalizations in the positive sense meaningful and possible. Instead of rattling off the by now well-known canon of Poe—Doyle . . . Hammett, the team of contributors has expanded e.g., the corpus of "Gebrauchs-literatur" that was first explored so skillfully by Hans-Otto Hügel (*Untersuchungsrichter, Diebsfänger, Detektive*, 1978). Space does not permit to deal individually with the main papers by Ulrich Broich, Otto Dann, Joachim Linder, Wolfgang Naucke, Jörg Schönert, Wolfram Siemann, and Elisabeth Schulze-Witzenrath. Instead, a few critical remarks will illustrate the virtues and some of the flaws which are based on one of the chapters done by the main editor, Jörg Schönert. In chapter five ("Zur Ausdifferenzierung des Genres 'Kriminalgeschichte' in der deutschen Literatur vom Ende des 18. bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts," 96-125) Schönert tries to introduce a meaningful periodization of that particular time span. He postulates that from general